



星月子猫・ω・

VOLUME 6

# **LV999 Villager**

**Volume 6**

**Author: Hoshitsuki Kitten**

**Illustrator: ?**

**Translate: [Xant & Minions](#)**

**Epub: [Henkanepubs](#)**

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# What's Truly Important Isn't Money | Part 1

“Krul! I’ll leave support to you!”

“Yes!”

The group was at the Ancient Cave, located a short distance from Balman, where the Legendary Holy Sword had formerly resided. Krul bestowed magic that strengthened one’s physical abilities onto Rex, who had yelled that out with a tense expression. At that moment, Rex’s entire body shone with a faint bluish light.

“Take this! Eat my fist! This attack will surpass that of a Martial Artist!”

After confirming that his physical abilities had indeed risen, Rex, who had yelled that in a loud voice at the Blue Devils on standby before him, flew at the Blue Devils with lightning speed.

“Ok, redo it.”

However, from the side, Kagami chopped Rex’s back, who had tried to fly at them, and then Rex was forced to grovel on the ground.

The Blue Devils, frightened by the inexplicable situation of a Human trying to attack them and then being embedded into the ground by another mediocre Human who had appeared from the side, backed away.

“W-What are you...doing, Shishou.”

Rex said with a bitter look, and glared at Kagami while he pulled himself up slowly.

Krul was flustered, not knowing what went wrong.

“Think carefully about the meaning of having you fight with your bare hands. There isn’t any meaning to it if you use magic to strengthen your physical abilities, right? You won’t receive any experience if you don’t fight in a disadvantageous situation.”

“Well...but Shishou, the Levels of the Blue Devil’s Level are 93. Even if I don’t fight at a disadvantage, I’ll still gain experience since my Level is 91, you know?”

"Regarding the experience value, rather than minding the Level gap, you will gain experience by fighting those who are at a higher rank than you. It's better for you to get used to fighting while at a disadvantage for now. I'll be able to save you if it becomes dangerous since I'm watching over you, so be at ease and fight. You want to become stronger quickly, right?"

After this was said, Rex reluctantly signaled Krul to undo the effects of her Phys Up Magic.

When this was done, Rex, who had always worn elegant clothes, changed into a shabby-looking traveller's outfit and charged towards the Blue Devils.

At that moment, even though three Blue Devils thrust their spears at Rex, just as they were about to connect with his cheek, Rex dodged them and dealt a blow to the Blue Devils' bodies.

"Did I do it!?"

Rex, who had dealt a beautiful blow to the Blue Devils, looked at the one that was sent flying, and at that moment, the ground beneath the Blue Devils burst into flames due to a casted Magic.

"Uwaachaaaa! Hot! Hot!"

Seeing Rex, who had always been a pompous character, get ruined and suffer like that, Krul hurriedly created a Water Ball with Magic and threw it at Rex's face. It immediately healed him with Healing Magic.

"It doesn't mean you need to defeat a higher ranked opponent in one move you know...you should defeat them by repeated hit and run tactics while enduring and not letting your guard down.

Kagami muttered that while sipping on some tea he had received from Alice, and watched Rex's hair sizzle and burn.

Presently, Kagami's group had visited the Ancient Cave once again to complete a monster subjugation request for the Ancient Cave issued by the Guild in Balman. Kagami had received the Quest, which was to subdue 12 Blue Devils altogether, that very morning, and by nightfall, Kagami had already completed the Blue Devil Subjugation Quest, since he had defeated the Monsters one by one.

He left the subjugation of the Blue Devils, which could provide experience depending on the Level gap due to their higher Levels, to Rex and Krul, who wanted to become stronger. So, in order to temper their bodies, he had been giving the two of them guidance.

For this reason, it had to be done formally, since it was rather convenient for Rex and Krul, even though they had doubts because they were being accompanied by David under the pretext of being an observer for the Quest Completions this time around.

“Umm...Is it fine for me to just cast Healing Magic like this?”

Although it was suspicious, since Krul had been casting her Healing Magic incessantly, Rex had been receiving an effect similar to the Automatic Recovery Kagami had. Besides that, regarding the gained experience dependent on Level Gap, Rex and Krul had decided to share it.

However, depending on the high ranked Monster battled, Rex could obtain the experience without sharing with Krul.

Healing Magic was only connected to life by preventing a potentially disadvantageous situation, but it still helped and was added onto the experience value. Performing Healing Magic was connected to one's life as they were injured and beaten to a pulp. When Kagami was still at a low Level, he had requested a town's Monk to help raise his Level like that.

“Well, even though you can only obtain experience depending on the Level Gap, Krul still looks like she's making a little progress with it, so it's fine if you get stronger like this, one step at a time.”

“But...this hasn't changed since the times when I had the Kingdom's Warriors help me get stronger!”

“Well, that may be so.”

Kagami, who seemed to have realized that somehow, replied to her after scratching his head. After sipping his tea once, while worrying about how to put that into words, David took a step forward when he saw that.

“Krul-sama. Kagami-sama is probably worried about you.”

“About...me?”

"Krul-sama is different from Rex-sama, as a girl and a Sage, which is not a Role suited to be a vanguard, she is weak to attacks, just like Monks and Magicians. As long as you listen to Kagami-sama... Battles against Higher Ranks will always be accompanied by danger, and even if you do get stronger, you will surely be visited by suffering that you can't evade."

"But compared to me, hasn't Kagami-san come this far with the Role of a weak Villager?"

As to whether she understood him, she said that with a frown, and a confused Kagami muttered, "Well, you are a girl...you're not saying that you want to be forced to experience something painful or scary...right?"

As if she had heard these subtle words, Krul's cheeks blushed slightly, feeling happy about Kagami worrying about her.

"S...Shishou, aren't you doing nothing more than giving her different treatment from me just because she's a girl?"

"You're a boy."

After having exchanged blows with the Blue Devils located here and there, a tottering Rex said that as he struck Kagami's shoulder with a 'pon', and Kagami replied to him with a beaming smile as if saying, 'Good luck.'

To be honest, regardless of her gender, to make Krul force herself too much was a pain that Kagami felt she couldn't endure.

Although Rex's motives were slightly impure, he had the resolution, conviction, and will to try and endure it. Him currently standing off against the Blue Devils without the slightest hesitation was solid evidence. Kagami was unconcerned, since he had 'bought' Rex in order to temper him.

As for Krul, she probably shouldn't be the core.

In the first place, if her Level was still 45 as a Sage, he felt that using this method to raise her Level and become stronger was better and more enjoyable than fighting impossible battles.

"When I started on this journey, I was still Level 42. I've only raised it...three Levels! It's only three, you know?"

"Well, that's about right, since you went a while without fighting a lot. Moreover, only two months have passed since the start of the journey, right? I understand your feelings of impatience, so calm down. Even though it's Rex's turn today, I've properly considered a method to make you stronger."

"...It's a promise, ok?"

"Aah, I promise."

"Then I'll be under your care until I reach Level 200, okay?"

"Eh? Ah...Y-Yes. It's a promise."

Kagami averted his eyes with all of his might after saying that. Krul, noticing his suspicious behavior, looked at him as if doubting him and spat out, "Why are you averting your eyes?" However, Kagami didn't try to look at her.

During this exchange, she had stopped her hands, which were healing Rex. Seeing Rex gradually becoming more ragged, Alice hurriedly carried over a potion to his mouth. Finally noticing it, along with a hurried Alice, Krul caught a hold of the bloody Rex and yelled out, "I-I'm sorry!" and directed some Healing Magic towards him.

"Hoho, although your skill in guiding them is splendid, it seems you don't have the knowledge to guide a girl's heart."

"'Shut up,' is what I would say, but is it necessary for an Observer to be here? The preparations for the Casino Opening depend on you, right? Isn't it the day after tomorrow?"

"I know what I'm doing. Everything has been completed. Since I have free time today, it's fine to accompany you. Of course, it's a necessary duty as an Observer."

After David gave him a pleasant, elegant smile, Kagami let out a sigh, saying, "I'm not a guy that can be eaten."

The Casino Opening had been postponed to the day after tomorrow. David's arrival meant that the preparations had been progressing fairly. Rather, he had completed the preparations using his excellent skills in a way that made it seem like things would have been hopeless if he hadn't been there.

The preparations included the goods available for use in the Casino, an operational check of the equipment, and an understanding of the Rules and the Staff rulesl. He had done everything, from agreeing on the premium goods and their rates to working on the Staff agenda, their working hours, and such.

Once this was done, it was fine to leave the management of the bar and taverns and the like to Takako, and to leave the things related to the Church to Tina. The things Kagami originally had to do had been shouldered by David.

“To be honest, I should be thankful to you. Even though I thought you were a dangerous person from the start because you said you were an Observer, I think it would have been dangerous if you weren’t here.”

“Hoho, it wasn’t with just my power alone. Takako-sama, was it? That gentleman is quite skillful, he helped me out by carrying miscellaneous items himself, and was suitable for the work that couldn’t be entrusted to any of the Staff. That gentleman is worthy of being a man amongst men.”

“Eh? Takako-chan’s a woman, you know?”

“Eh?”

“Hm? Well, Takako-chan is a woman after all, you know? She wore a pink dougi, right?”

“I’m sorry for troubling you. She is not someone that should be called a woman.”

“Without a doubt, Takako-chan would have killed you if she was here, come back to reality, man.”

# What's Truly Important Isn't Money | Part 2

Perhaps it was because his reality had received a sizable shock from Kagami, but David was at a loss for words after hearing this and had a surprised expression, while sweat formed on his forehead. Kagami was slightly bewildered by the dramatic change in his expression.

"Why...are you this surprised?"

Although there had been countless cases where people were surprised to find out that Takako was a woman before now, David had a fearful expression, rather than being surprised.

"Although this was while I was managing work with Takako-sama...she would place her arms around my shoulders, around my waist, strike my buttocks, and to encourage me, she would always say...'You're a good man, I've always waiting...for a firm person like you to come to me. You have a very strong heart.'"

"Aah, that's her mating call."

"I beg your pardon. What you're saying...is a joke...right?"

After listening to David's question, Kagami turned away in an honest manner. David made an expression that looked like he was drained of all his energy. Before he could say 'Please do something about it', Kagami moved towards Alice, who was cheering on Rex, who was fighting hurriedly.

"What's wrong, Kagami-san? You have a sorrowful look on you..."

"Well, even though it's shocking that I'm an unmarried man without the thoughts of finding a wife quickly, I'm shivering at seeing David being targeted."

Kagami, who saw that David was still in an absentminded state, thought about

it from the bottom of his heart. He didn't want to become like David. To be honest, he felt that if he were locked-on to by Takako-chan, he wouldn't be able to run away from her.

He could only feel that she would chase him to the end of the earth. Although it was only for a moment, Kagami seriously thought that he should quickly calm down before he was targeted in such a way.

"It'll be fine, I'm here with Kagami-san after all."

Alice placed her hand on her chest with a 'Don', as though it was natural for her to say that, and gave him a smile. Kagami muttered, without thinking, 'If I'm not married 10 years later,' while giving a small smile to Alice, who had showed him a decisive attitude.

Although she momentarily showed him an unsatisfied look at these words, she looked at him shyly after thinking about it in a positive light, since she couldn't hate and refuse him.

Suddenly, Krul began to panic, as though she had heard him. Nearby, Rex was beginning to accumulate damage again.

"Krul-san. Rex will end up dying at this rate, is that fine?"

"A-Awawa...I-I'm sorry!"

She blushed and immediately cast healing magic on Rex. However, as soon as her healing magic ended, Krul approached Kagami and said "What is the meaning of this!?"

"Well, I'm saying that IF there's nobody with me after 10 years. I understand how you feel, the absentminded David is also here right now, and just because she's Alice, for you to say a lot of negative things is..."

"Kagami-san is 23 years old right now, right? In 10 years...won't you be a 30 year old uncle!? Alice-chan is still 14 years old, you know! Besides, if she remains unmarried, having her marry such a self-centered person with that age difference will make Alice pitiable! I won't forgive it!"

"Ah, what about you?"

It was obvious that Alice was a Demon, so Kagami, who thought that she was

saying that because she couldn't forgive a Demon marrying a human, became slightly disappointed.

When Alice, who appeared to not understand Krul's words, said, "I don't mind it at all," Krul began saying things like "It's useless! There is an old saying, 'Life is short, so fall in love with girls...' and 'Don't waste your youth, so decide quickly', trying to steal a march on her. However, Krul began to understand the subtle, honest feeling she had caught a glimpse of from Alice, and after considering her position, decided that she had to win against Alice fair and square.

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"I-I've...finally defeated them. The things that happened here were well beyond my expectations...amazing, Shishou. My heart nearly gave out countless times, you know?"

"Well, all of the times when your heart nearly gave out was generally because of Krul though?"

At long last, the figures of the Blue Devils had changed into gold, and it had not been several minutes after he let out a war cry of victory. Whether or not his heart had truly suffered, Rex's pupils were slightly hollow, and Krul, who saw this, showed an apologetic expression.

"By the way, what's wrong with David-dono? He hasn't moved at all since earlier."

"David-san is trying to confront a new trial that faces him. Don't get in his way."

Although Rex directed a puzzled gaze towards David when he heard this, after learning the fact that he was being targeted by Takako-chan, Rex's expression immediately changed to one of pity.

"So, how is it? How much exp did you get?"

After Kagami asked, Rex immediately displayed his own Status Window. The amount of exp displayed in the Status Window had increased.

Rex had previously confirmed that his exp value was at 10% before he fought with the Blue Devils, and the previous battle had increased it to 20%. After

seeing this, Rex's eyes opened widely and he was at a loss for words.

Since exp gain was dependent on the Level Gap, as well as one's own level gap with their opponent, if someone with Rex's Level gap was thinking about raising their Level, they would need to defeat 30 Blue Devils to fill it up. Yet, despite having a separate exp value from Krul, he had obtained enough exp to increase his gauge to 20% just by defeating one of them, so he couldn't help being surprised.

"So much...exp?"

"Oh, you've obtained quite a bit. You can't obtain it if you don't suffer enough for it to be enormous every time though."

"But, it's fast. I see...this is the reason that Shishou reached his Level at such a young age."

"I also have a skill that heals me automatically. It's fine because Krul is with us right now, but you must not fight strong enemies if you are unable to bring Krul along with you, or else you won't be able to power through it at this speed, you know? You'll also lose everything if you die."

After this was said, Rex showed him a slightly worried look. Healing that was dependent on medicine like potions were unreliable when fighting with a risk of death, since there was a limit to the number of times it would display an effect. If he wanted to try confronting opponents that were too strong, just like Kagami, it would be difficult without a means of constantly healing himself by a fixed amount.

If he wanted to raise his own Level, it would be necessary to get stronger by fighting opponents. If that happened, he should not fight things strong enough to kill his party. If possible, he would learn a way to heal himself.

"At which stage...did Shishou obtain his automatic healing Skill?"

"I remember that it was the first one, Level 100."

"100, huh...it would be great if I, too, could learn a healing Skill."

"It seems that it's impossible. Although that Demon uncle who called himself Estellar said it himself, it's a super rare case, and it also seems that only Villagers

can learn strange Skills."

After Kagami said this, Rex was at a loss and let out a sigh. However, he made a serious expression, as if he had remembered something, and looked towards Kagami. Then:

"Shishou's Skills are his Automatic Heal and the one that makes you go past your limits, which you let us see...What other kinds do you have? You still have seven other Skills, right?"

He asked Kagami the question he had suddenly thought of.

G5: Kagami's skills and their effects is now out. Something is wrong with you if you don't laugh.

# What's Truly Important Isn't Money | Part 3

"Well I didn't plan to hide it this long...at least, I shouldn't reveal it normally, right? I shouldn't show my cards."

"I realize that, but it's been on my mind."

After Rex said that, Alice and Krul nodded in agreement, supporting him. Seeing this, Kagami let out a sigh and said, "Do you really want to know about it...?", before opening his Status Window. Then, a list of his Skills was displayed.

"Super...Finger...? Hyper Finger...Hey, Kagami-san."

"What's wrong?"

"Aren't there a lot of Finger Skills?"

Alice, who had seen the names of the Skills displayed on his Status Window, muttered that innocently. The first skill, which was displayed at the top of the list, she recognized from before was 『Auto Revive』, and the next one, which he had learned at Level 200, was a Skill called 『Super Finger』.

After that 『Hyper Finger』, 『Ultra Finger』, 『Miracle Finger』, 『Perfect Finger』, 『Exotic Full Burst Act 5』, 『Reverse』, 『Limiter Release』, and 『The One Who Challenges God』 were lined up on the display.

"Although you already told us about Auto Revive, Limiter Release, and The One Who Challenges God...This group of Finger Skills, and Exotic Full Burst...? What are these, they sound amazing?"

"Don't rush. I wanted to show them to you one at a time. Although it was mentioned before, you're expecting amazing effects like with the other three Skills, right? These Skills are the shitty ones."

Although Alice, Rex, and Krul gave Kagami, who had emphasized his words, bewildered looks, the description of Super Finger was immediately displayed on the Status Window, and they looked at it. This is what was written on the Status Window.

『Super Finger』

Effect: Strengthens finger's striking power.

After reading the effect, Alice, Rex, and Krul displayed difficult expressions.

"This is...a Skill that was called out by that Demon Estellar? How much power does it add to your finger strike?"

Krul asked him timidly.

"One finger gives the same amount of power as a strike that uses two fingers."

In response to this, Rex muttered, 'So subtle...', and showed a look of pity.

Continuing, Kagami displayed the names of the Finger Skills in order and showed their effects to the three of them.

『Hyper Finger』

Effect: Additionally strengthens finger's striking power.

『Ultra Finger』

Effect: Additionally strengthens finger's striking power.

『Miracle Finger』

Effect: When using a finger to strike, it will be immune to injuries.

『Perfect Finger』

Effect: Regardless of the situation, striking aim will be precise.

"Do you guys understand? The feelings I had back then, when I continued to acquire these Skills that couldn't be used until Level 600? Although I finally became able to defeat a slime with a booger, the way they attack you is normally strong, right?"

A Villager was an unfortunate existence in the first place, so Rex and Krul, who could easily imagine the despair from having Skills like these, showed him a bitter look.

At the same time, they felt like they kind of understood why Kagami could obtain a unique Skill that surpassed his limits. Truly, if he had not received Automatic Heal from the start, perhaps Kagami wouldn't exist today.

"B-But! What about Level...700? Haven't you learned other Skills besides the

Finger ones? Surely you were rewarded for your efforts and for not giving up! Those Skill names seem kind of amazing.”

Seeing from their expressions that the two were unable to take it any longer, Alice followed up with a smile, thinking that she had to do something about it. However, Kagami didn’t use words to reply, changing his Status Window and displayed the details for 『Exotic Full Burst Act 5』 instead.

### 『Exotic Full Burst Act 5』

Effect: A cool name.

“I felt utter despair when I learned this Skill. That was when I thought about beating the crap out of the gods.”

Alice couldn’t answer Kagami, who said that with a serious look, at all. At the moment, it was painful enough to learn about his true feelings at the time, like his despair, his suffering, and his sadness.

Then, just like that, Kagami displayed his final Skill.

Rex, Krul and Alice, who had abandoned any possibilities of seeing amazing Skills, were filled with the desire to praise and hug Kagami, who had done his best until the shitty skill he got at Level 700, and then they looked at the new Skill.

### 『Reverse』

Effect: As long as your Level is lower than your opponent, you can use powerful skills and magic without a cost. However, if your level is higher than your opponent, the powerful skills and magic you can use decrease.

“This Skill...could it be, it’s this Skill that wouldn’t let Kagami-san use magic and only allowed you to use simple skills?”

Although they hadn’t expected anything when looking at it, Krul saw this skill and asked him that timidly, while wearing a surprised expression. Kagami then looked at her seriously once again, with a tired atmosphere around him, and said:

“This Skill...I learned it when I reached Level 800.”

With these words, she instantly understood what he meant.

Krul and Rex hadn't thought that there would be a Skill that would actually make you weaker.

Although they didn't know how many interpretations there were, since Kagami had only used simple skills like Charge Blow until now, this Skill could only make him seem more pitiful, since he was completely unable to fully utilize any skills, despite reaching the highest level.

From this, he couldn't help but bear a grudge against the gods, and they had to agree with him on that.

# What's Truly Important Isn't Money | Part 4

"B-But...I think it's amazing that you defeated a Slime by flinging a booger at it with your finger. It seems like you can use something else too...There isn't a need to have such hatred."

When Rex followed up with this, Kagami scratched his head and let out a sigh.

"Certainly, it doesn't mean I can't use it, but I'm talking about comparing it to normal Skills. Should I be satisfied with what I got, with just my fingers getting stronger?"

"Isn't it just fine that you can use them? I have yet to learn a single one, you know."

"Well, it's good that you have a dream. I can't learn any more of them, right? It would be good if the Skills Rex learns can be used for our plans. Also, if they're Skills that are hopeless for our plans...Well, I'll treat you to your favorite meal."

Rex and Krul simultaneously imagined 『Exotic Full Burst Act 5』in their minds and showed him a look of pity. Only Alice felt something when she heard the word 'Plan', and although she tried to ask him by tugging on the hem of Kagami's clothes—

"You're here! Kagami-chan! Geez...It took a while to find you, since this dungeon is so wide, you know?"

Suddenly, a giant called Takako, who could be mistaken as a Monster, hurriedly appeared from the far end of the dungeon. After reconsidering the words that had not come out of her throat yet, thinking 'Well, it's not like it's enough to ask about it', Alice rushed towards Takako.

"You surprised me, what I thought was a new Monster turned out to be Takako-chan."

"Geez, Kagami-chan...I'll punish you, you know?"

"I'm sorry."

Takako, who always had a happy smile on her face, instantly made a gaze as sharp as a thorn, causing Kagami to reflexively sit down in a dogeza.

"So, what's wrong, Takako-chan? Taking the trouble to come here, is there an emergency?"

After Alice gave an amused smile at seeing him sitting in a dogeza, she turned towards Takako and asked that question.

In answer, Takako made a troubled expression while saying 'There's a bit of trouble', and began to look around, as if she was frantically searching for someone. Then, her gaze stopped on David, who stiffened, and she rushed towards him while showing a face that was beaming with smiles and wriggling her body.

As a Kagami, who was sitting in a dogeza, came into view, David muttered, 'This is already hopeless, so I don't know.'

"Please listen to me, David-san, I have a problem...David-san?"

"...Hohehi!? T-Takako-sama, is it? What's wrong? To be here in such a place."

"It's a bit of a problem. Although we brought in the alcohol that we planned to serve at the Casino Bar and Taverns...I've forgotten to order the alcohol that was to be used as service drinks for the guests who come to our casino, as well as the drinks we were going to use as casino commodities...The amount we have at my bar aren't enough."

Although Takako, who had appeared suddenly, had a worried expression, David switched to a serious expression after listening to her, and with a 'Fumu...', he thought about it. When he saw this, Kagami concluded that he should also participate and rushed towards the two of them.

"Isn't it fine to buy them from the merchants?"

"Using service drinks is slightly expensive, but we are capable of using a

substitute. However, since we planned to use slightly high-grade alcohol as a commodity item to serve people, even if we buy it from merchants, we won't have enough. We also need to figure out the brand names."

Kagami lightly grabbed his head and showed a troubled look. There were wine cellars even in Balman, and although they could brew alcohol, it would be a lower quality when compared to the goods they had originally planned to have, and there wouldn't be enough to make the commodities they were planning to use to serve people in the casino.

It was because the guests they would have at the casino would mostly be nobles. Since there was a possibility of having select nobles suspect the Casino's dignity if they were served cheap commodities, they had gone with David's plan of preparing the highest class items.

"It's my oversight...I'm sorry, Kagami-chan."

"It's fine already, Takako-chan has done a lot for us. If we were to wait to bring the next shipment in, it would be one week later...even if I went to pick it up myself, I would need three days to do it. Let's give up and make do with the commodities we have at the moment. It will be fine to obtain it later, even if it doesn't make it in time for the opening."

"Please wait a moment, we might still be able to do it somehow."

At this time, David, who had been absorbed in his thoughts, muttered that.

"It might be possible...We would take the highway, pass through the nearby forest, and take a carriage towards Salumeria, which has a wine cellar managed by the Kingdom. If we offered to negotiate with them, perhaps...we should be able to request them to sell it to us without needing to go too far."

Kagami shuddered a bit when he heard this. Since the Kingdom was a land where a lot of nobles gathered, there was fierce competition, as there was a lot of alcohol with improved qualities from high-class cellars. It didn't mean that all of their alcohol was sellable though, and there were often stories about them leaving to sell it to various parts of the world on expeditions.

However, it was too strange for one to know about the routes they took, as well as their agenda for these alcohol sales.

Normally, this information couldn't be acquired unless one was a local who often dealt with stores that managed this alcohol. Yet David, who didn't seem to have any particular relations to it, knew about this.

"Why do you know about such things?"

"Well, no matter what kind of information it is, I've looked it up beforehand. I still don't know if we can actually properly pass through it though."

After David said this, he let out a light laugh, 'Hohoho', as if deceiving Kagami.

Although there had been many instances like this already, due to him helping out with the Casino, David had decided to look up information he didn't know that could be useful later on.

Even if David had looked it up beforehand, Kagami didn't know the process of obtaining this information, which was enough to wonder why on earth he would do so. However, when compared to themselves, David had an information network that they didn't have.

This was what Kagami thought. In other words, it meant that the reason David was borrowing power from somewhere to observe Kagami, as well as what kind of information he was spreading to whom, was because he was placed in a situation that he could not control.

"Nevertheless, as expected, it's probably...a wait-and-see."

However, even if that was the case, David was useful. Since David was on Krul's side, he was unable to bluntly refuse. He didn't know what David was thinking about, but he couldn't complain about a situation where he wasn't being grabbed by the tail, so Kagami decided, in his heart, that he would be saddled with a superior staff, since there hadn't been any disadvantageous events that could lead to their tails being caught.

At this time, after Kagami looked at Takako and wondered as to whether David was capable of doing a lot of work, he turned towards David, who was in a dreadful trance, and said 'Then, I'll leave the rest to you', deciding that the two of them were enough to do it.

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The next day. In the morning, after waiting for the carriage to carry the alcohol via the highway route suggested by David's information, it had begun transporting alcohol from cellars famous even in the Kingdom, and they were successful in purchasing everything, due to David's negotiation.

Kagami's group had solved their problems for the moment, and became very busy with the preparations for the Casino opening, which had been deferred to the next day. Today, without taking on a single quest, each and every one of them had been preparing inside the newly built casino.

"Hmm...As I thought, this was meant for Alice-chan. Yeah, it's this."

"You understand it, don't you, Kagami-chan! You're doing excellent!"

"To have such an idea with this...Kagami-san, are you a genius!?"

Meanwhile, Kagami, Takako, and Krul had decided to spend their time inside the Casino by dressing up Alice, who was helping out as the Casino's Mascot.

Currently, Alice was wearing a cute, fluttering dress that was hand-picked by Krul, a hair ornament chosen by Takako, and a stuffed animal which Kagami had forced her to hold. She had been played around with as if she was a dress-up doll.

By the way, Krul and Takako had been coordinating the outfit seriously, but Kagami was half amused by it.

# What's Truly Important Isn't Money | Part 5

“Umm...Everyone, it’s really hard to move in these clothes, but they’re cute.”

Alice wore a strained smile from start to finish. Although it had been enjoyable, since she was at an age where she wanted to be fashionable, Alice had been intimidated by Takako’s and Krul’s slightly powerful enthusiasm.

“It’s futile! It’s important to limit one’s freedom of movement in order to charm people, you know! Trust me, I’m a Martial Artist! Alice-chan’s foundation is fine, so you have to show off your good qualities to your surroundings more!”

Although Martial Artists had a Persuasion Power when they spoke, Kagami thought, with a serious expression, that Takako’s persuasive power would vanish like smoke.

“That’s right! Your long-awaited big moment...even if you deceive your friends later on, the first impression is the most important! Trust me, I’m the Princess!”

Krul supported Takako, her eyes sparkling as she held onto the clothes she wanted Alice to try with one hand. Kagami perceived the Persuasion Power that he could not match, so he tried to leave the Casino’s break room and go check on the state of the Staff members who were preparing the facilities for tomorrow.

“Ah, please wait a moment Kagami-san! M-Me too! I’ll go with you!”

Although Alice, who was being jostled by Takako and Krul, yelled something out from behind him as he was trying to depart from the break area, he decided to ignore it and closed the door.

“I’m sorry Alice, be a good girl and stay here for me.”

Kagami muttered that and then let out a sigh of relief. Although David had

been treated like a silent shadow, he had in fact been standing at the edge of the break area, as if he was watching over them warmly.

They had gotten used to it recently, but it felt bad to be observed by him. It was unusual for David to devote himself to helping out and observe Kagami, but he didn't try to leave Krul's side, since he was fundamentally there to observe Krul. If one considered the situation as locking up David in the break area, Alice's sacrifice was essential.

"...It's been a long time since I moved by myself."

Recently, no matter where Kagami went, he had always been accompanied by Alice, Krul, and Rex, so compared to that, Kagami felt like he was walking in an exclusive Staff hallway when walking in the Casino by himself.

Although he hadn't been with Rex, other than the times when they headed out, Alice and Krul were different. From morning till evening, no matter where they went or where they ate, the two of them had always accompanied Kagami.

Even when they rested in their own rooms in an inn, without any particular tasks to do, they did enough to remain there. Alice, who tried her best to avoid being forcibly taken back by Menou, didn't return with him, and Krul, who rented a room in the same inn, didn't even try to leave his room, even when it was time for them to sleep or when she didn't have an individual task to do.

Perhaps it was thanks to David coming with them, but recently, although he would come to take her back as soon as it became night, the three of them ended up waking up together every day, regardless of fatigue.

"How long has it been since I lost my private life, huh?"

Rather than escaping from David's observation, Kagami considered it to be running away from the two of them, but he was satisfied with the feeling of freedom that came with being alone, which he hadn't felt in a long time.

As he slowly walked while in good spirits, his head held high, his feet took him towards the main hall so he could tidy up the play equipment, which were the main attraction of the casino.

The one who was in charge of the Casino's main hall was Menou. He was skillful enough to be abnormal, and perhaps it was due to his remarkable

memory, but he was almost too exceptional as a Casino Dealer.

In the beginning, everyone had tried their hand at being a Card and Roulette Dealer, in order to decide who was the most competent as a Casino Dealer manager, and it turned out that Menou was the most suitable.

Therefore, the management of the Main Hall staff, the education of the Casino Dealer staff, and the management of the halls had all been left to Menou.

"I want...a break. I want...comfort...Rest...comfort...res...comf..."

These were Menou's only words.

Recently, Menou had been working too hard without any rest. They wouldn't make it in time for the opening if he didn't work this hard.

In the beginning, the total number of Staff recruited had been 40 people; however, since it was clear that they didn't have enough hands to manage the Casino on a 24-hour system, with David's suggestion, they doubled the amount of people. It was now 80 people.

Although 50 of them would work as Casino Dealers, the inexperienced staff that didn't know how to be dealers needed to be taught.

The existence of a leader who could teach Casino Dealers and train Casino Staff within this short period of a week was essential, and regrettably, Menou had filled this role, even during his sleep hours.

Although, in the beginning, he had been working diligently for the goal of earning 10,000 Gold to rescue the Demon King and to quickly save up funds for Alice's daily life, it was clear that the liveliness in his eyes had vanished recently. Although he had taken one-hour breaks, he seldom summoned Alice, so he seemed to be approaching his limits.

Currently, he was shuffling cards splendidly enough to captivate the eyes while moaning "Uu...aaah" like a zombie.

"T...This is? K-Kagami-dono? I-I'll go to Alice's side immediately!"

The moment Kagami was reflected in Menou's eyes, the liveliness instantly returned.

"She isn't here."

However, with these words, Menou's liveliness instantly vanished from his eyes.

"So? How are you feeling? Does it look like we'll make it in time for tomorrow's opening?"

"Fu...haha, there is no need to worry about it. I have finished the education of the humans I am responsible for."

"I-Is that so...Then, why don't you take a break already, Menou?"

"What I finished was just the guidance of the humans...I still haven't finished... instructing the Staff about maintaining the equipment for tomorrow...I can't rest yet, Kagami-dono."

Although Menou recovered some of his vigor as he said this, it was clear he was in bad shape. His eyes weren't in focus, a small amount of saliva was dripping out of his mouth, and his face showed that "he was a completely dead person," in the words of Kagami.

"Guidance Instructor Menou! The preparations for the tables and equipment have been completed!"

"Guidance Instructor Menou! The preparations for the slot machines have been completed! The setting of the initial jackpot frequency has also been completed! We're ready to go...whenever!"

Beside him, who looked like a dead person, were two female Staff members, dressed in full Casino uniforms and looking like orderly Knights trained by the Kingdom's Army, who had rushed to him to report that.

"T-This is Owner-dono! I didn't realize it was you, please forgive my rudeness!"

As soon as they saw Kagami, the two Staff members knelt in place and bowed.

These movements were like those of Knights who were fully trained to serve a King.

"...Menou, what exactly are you teaching them?"

"Of course, in general, I taught them the manners of a Casino Dealer, as well as the essential manners and etiquette to serve the owner, how to fight as the owner's shield, and how to conduct themselves in defending the land we possess

if, by chance, we were attacked. I do admire how well they have been raised within this week."

"Is that so? So you were actually an idiot."

# What's Truly Important Isn't Money | Part 6

After that, Kagami instructed Menou to go home and rest immediately. The remaining Staff members, who were preparing and cleaning the facilities, had continuously told him to come again tomorrow morning.

After that, he walked towards the Bar. Although the Bars were located in the Main Hall, they were only basic ones, and it was necessary to go towards Bar Street, next to the Main Hall, if one wanted to enjoy the atmosphere properly. There were lots of Bars set up around there, each separated individually by atmosphere and alcohol, and the management of all that alcohol had been left to Takako.

Although, at the moment, Takako was busy changing Alice's clothes, Kagami decided he should confirm if her work was progressing smoothly, so he went to go check the stores one by one.

Every time he entered a store, he confirmed that all of the preparations had been made, while feeling uncomfortable with the greetings of, "Owner! Good work!", that the Staff members had been giving him.

"As expected of Takako-chan...it's been completed perfectly...Hmm?"

Kagami was feeling relieved, thinking, 'It was already fine,' when he saw it. Towards the end of the street where the Bars were lined up, a queer sign came into sight, one that even he couldn't understand. Although the exterior was similar to other Bars, the sign had queer letters written on it, reading 'Takako's Room'.

Kagami opened the door timidly, and took in a dangerous, intense smell.

Inside, he saw three tank-top, speedo-wearing lumps of muscle, who were

cleaning the inside of the bar, Kagami instantly shut the door.

Deciding that he hadn't seen anything, Kagami headed towards the taverns located in an area opposite from the bars.

The taverns had been left to David to manage. It was more or less due to being unable to leave the business to amateurs, unlike Takako and David. The candidates for this were either Rex or David, since it would be bad if rumors of the princess, Krul, working at a Casino spread.

However, Rex couldn't be relied on to work too much, since he was a hot-blooded person without any work experience who had been tempering himself since he was born, so Kagami decided that the management would be left to David.

By the way, Krul helped out with serving food at the taverns behind the scenes, and it was decided that Rex was to work as a part of the tavern Staff.

"...This is?"

When he walked into a tavern, there were bewildered Staff members sitting in chairs inside. After looking at the restless Staff members, he found Rex seated in the same manner and approached him, seeking an explanation about their situation.

"David-dono has...I have absolutely nothing to do, since he did everything in the morning."

Rex muttered that. When Kagami looked around the inside of the tavern, it appeared that the preparations were complete. The menu had been properly prepared, condiments had been laid out on the tables to be used freely, and there was even a Recommendation Board in the tavern, which had 'Today's Recommendation: Seafood Salad!', written on it.

When he walked into the kitchen behind them, the appliances had been sorted into the appropriate locations, the food ingredients had been perfectly separated in the storage area, the necessary preliminary food had already been prepared, and large tubs with ice water had already been prepared for the alcohol that would be brought the next day. Certainly, there was nothing left to do at all.

“That uncle is too exceptional, it’s scary.”

Kagami was bewildered, not understanding how someone could use their time to complete this by themselves.

Surely, if someone could do this, even Takako would fall in love with the guy. However, he couldn’t neglect the Staff that wasn’t doing anything, and the Staff members replied with, “We’ve already done it five times...” showing expressions of bewilderment after Rex ordered the Staff to “Go clean it.” The tables were polished so much that they were shining, proving their statement.

“Disperse.”

After all, it couldn’t be helped that they had nothing to do, so Kagami instructed the Staff to disperse and to restore their energy for tomorrow. Then, he headed towards the Chapel that had been established in the casino. Rex said that he would help out if there was any unfinished business left, so he accompanied Kagami.

The Chapel was located in the center of the Main Hall, and the passageway was lined with taverns and bars. Tina had suggested that she didn’t need any help with the Chapel’s preparations, so she had been working on them by herself.

“Ah, Kagami-san! Rex-san!”

After the two arrived at the Chapel, Tina, who had been carrying cardboard boxes diligently, approached them, and gave them a bright look. The Chapel preparations were mostly complete. Even an altar had been established, and there was cloth spread on the benches lined up in front of it.

“That looks heavy, TinaTina.”

After Kagami said this, Tina forcibly pushed the cardboard boxes onto Kagami.

“If that’s what you think, then please help out.”

When Tina said this, Kagami and Rex divided the work of carrying the boxes of fortune charms that were in the middle of the Chapel and carried them towards the storeroom in the back. Although the weight wasn’t cumbersome, it was troublesome that they had to go back and forth several times, and they

regretted that they had ordered a bit too much in small amounts.

At the same time, Kagami admired Tina, who had been carrying this many without complaining at all.

“Besides helping out with placing the goods, everything had been left up to you. Specifically how you plan to use this Chapel?”

“Rather, why do you, who created this Chapel, lack plans for it?”

“I thought Tina would do it for me.”

“Please put that into effect after telling me about it, before you make a Chapel.”

Tina puffed her cheeks and said that while staring at Kagami. At that moment, Tina looked away from him, and with a ‘yareyare’, she let out a sigh. She then presented a stack of documents to Kagami.

“Even if it’s a Chapel, there’s a church in this city, and since it’s not necessary to take in orphans nor live here, the miscellaneous duties only include cleaning. After that, there are the Staff who will sell the merchandise that was imposed by Kagami-san on a 24-hour schedule. I already requested David to make arrangement for this, so it’s fine now.”

“Huh, will there not be any sermons and the like? Having people gather several times a day and preach about god’s teachings?”

“You’ll be damned if you expound on god’s teachings in places like a Casino, you know? Even though they would be cursed at best, what would you do if the people who were utterly defeated vented their resentment on me in the Casino?”

As this was said, Kagami confirmed his understanding with an, “I see.” Just because there was a Chapel in the Casino, Tina had tried to defend the town’s Church, even though she had no relation to it. Kagami would reconsider if it was bad to preach god’s teachings here.

“Hm? Then what plans, exactly, does Tina have for this Chapel?”

“I, Krul-san, and Rex-san, will help out by cooking behind the scenes. This will help out the town’s Church.”

“Eh, then there really wasn’t any meaning in creating this Chapel. Look, make it more like a Church, at least prepare a Confession Booth and listen to confessions.”

“Confessions are done by the Holy Father, and not someone like me, a woman! In the first place, I’m still in the middle of training.”

“Well, let’s create a new religion here, and make rules so that Tina can listen to the confessions.”

“No.”

Tina frowned at Kagami’s proposal and replied immediately.

Kagami, who wanted to put the Chapel to use since he had taken great pains to build it, held his head at the very Tina-like response, and searched for a positive method of using the Chapel in the Casino.

“Ah...That’s it. How about a Consulting Booth? Instead of asking for forgiveness from the gods, you would simply be a consultant who would heal the hearts of those who were utterly defeated. No matter what their losses are, you will try to make them think about wanting to come again.”

“Isn’t it better for someone else to do the consulting?”

“Well, even though we’ve spent a month together, I think the one who listened to me the most was Tina. Compared to Takako-chan, I think it’s easier to talk with you. You’re so sensitive that you even react to trivial things.”

After Kagami said this while pointing at her, Tina blushed in embarrassment going, “...uuh,” and then became silent, without denying it.

“Shisou, what about me? Even I have confidence when it comes to talking.”

“Five out of the eight people in our group can speak better than you, so don’t talk.”

“I’m not better than those people!?”

“Well, putting Rex aside, let’s have you do a test run once.”

Ignoring Rex, who he had unintentionally shocked, Kagami clasped his hands together and said that to Tina, as if he was beseeching her earnestly. After she

showed him a slightly worried look, he let out a sigh and said:

“...It will only be once, you know.”

He then entered the room which was built in the Chapel for listening to confessions. Kagami walked further and entered an adjoining room inside of this room.

Inside the Confession Booth, there was nothing but a chair, and after Tina and Kagami faced each other, separated by a thin wall, they sat in the chairs that had been placed there.

“So what does Kagami-san want to consult about? It seems unlikely to be about worries, though.”

“Let’s give them a formal performance since we took great pains to build it. Tina, talk like a Saint for a bit.”

After Kagami suggested this, Tina frankly muttered “Eh...” unpleasantly. However, after considering that it would only happen once, she coughed violently, and even though she couldn’t see him, she switched her state of mind to a more serious one.

“Lost lamb, speak of the worries that trouble you so.”

She said that courteously. Kagami’s expression became serious upon encountering Tina’s unexpected manner of speech, and he slowly opened his mouth.

“I...even though it’s a Casino I built myself, I ended up leaving its management to other people. As a result, awful stores have been built with beings who are only lumps of muscle. What should I do about it?”

“Please live strongly and healthily.”

These were the only words Tina said.

# What's Truly Important Isn't Money | Part 7

"You two...this is fine already. It won't change that much."

As for Alice, whose outfit design was dependent on Takako and Krul, 30 minutes had passed since Kagami had left the break room. Alice couldn't suppress her feelings of wanting to run away from the situation, where they were constantly changing her clothes, which were nearly the same every time.

"You can't! It's important to dress up the parts that you can't see. Dignity can be born if you consider the combination of colors, you know!"

"That's right, Alice-chan. If this becomes a Casino where many nobles walk around, they could look at your every nook and cranny with their indecent eyes, and they won't be blamed for it. When I was added into the party as a Princess... oh how I realized the appearance of my body! You're the face of this Casino, Alice-chan! They will be able to look at you!"

Although Alice tried them on after Takako and Krul had tried persuading her several times, the two of them didn't waste a moment and prevented her from running away, so Alice showed them a weak-looking expression with an '...Au'.

Although David looked at this scene with a smile, Alice was only strangely ashamed by him. She momentarily thought, 'He is watching me stand on my feet for an hour, but is he not busy?'

"You two, an hour has almost passed. Although you two have the stamina of an adult, Alice-sama is still a child. I think it's about time to wrap this up."

Just as Alice thought that, David took a step towards her and helped her in a timely fashion. Although Alice's expression brightened for a moment because of this unexpected help:

“Please, David. Just a little bit longer! This is for Alice-chan!”

“Hohoho! It can’t be helped then!”

As Alice pleaded with her eyes pointing upward, David gave up on helping her, smiling happily compared to earlier. When she saw this, Alice looked like she had given up on wanting to say something at all and let out a small sigh, uttering, ‘Kagami-san...Please come back quickly...’

“However, Krul-sama, your mood has changed quite a bit. A long time ago, you didn’t show any interest in things that you could bind yourself to, but you are now personally trying to find some.”

Krul blinked at David’s words and showed a bewildered look, as though she had not realized her change personally, and responded with ‘I-I see?’.

“Alice-chan has a unique charm to her. I haven’t changed, you know.”

“Well, of course Alice-sama is attractive, but I’m not just thinking about that. I’ve been watching Krul-sama for a while, but with Kagami-sama...Krul-sama changed after meeting him on various occasions.”

After saying this, David had a sad expression on his face, as if he was remembering the distant past.

When Krul heard the word ‘Meet,’ she thought that certainly might be the case and brought her hand to her chest, wearing a reserved smile.

“I also think that. It doesn’t mean that the way you speak and your personality itself has changed...and rather than saying that there isn’t any point in arguing about it, umm...You looked at me for who I am. I think that Krul-san is a very special person to me, one who also trusts me!...I might have never said this, though.”

Alice tried her best to tell that to Krul, as though she was supporting David’s words, while Krul gestured and felt embarrassed about the changes he had stated.

While she was confused about this, she felt some warmth gathering in her heart. When she finally realized it, she smiled happily and placed her hand on Alice’s head.

"Well, I'm happy that you said that for me. I wasn't aware of it, but I couldn't expect my current way of life, compared to how I lived in the past. Even if I did expect it...I had thought that it was hopeless."

Krul remembered the first time she had encountered Alice while she said this. Although Alice had been a companion she had once wanted to kill, with the reason of 'she was an unreasonable Demon', Alice had now said that Krul was an 'important person' to her. Krul now felt that she was intimate enough with Alice to want to protect her.

When comparing the past and the present, it was strange enough for her to wonder why she had wanted to kill Alice without listening to her, so she recognized her own changes. She had thought that it was necessary to kill Alice. This was natural, since she had been taught that this was the world's ploy, after all.

She had lost the ability to think for herself. Although there had been times when she began to think about it, she had immediately abandoned thinking about things that she felt compelled to do. It had been the same since Rex had brought Krul with him, and when she had become companions with Palna and Tina.

If anyone were to say that she had changed, then the causes for those changes were obvious. It was the meeting with the unexpected Villager. Krul clearly thought that the beginning of everything was her encounter with Kagami.

In the beginning, she had been confused. However, she immediately understood that he was a happy person. When Balman was under attack from the Demon King Army, he protected her from her careless actions, which had nearly harmed her people, and he strictly scolded her for them.

It was the first time for her. The first time someone had immediately objected to her decisions as a Princess and given her a chop on the head. She might have been interested since that time.

Before she had realized it, Krul became aware that it was useless to think about such things. Kagami always did everything he could do. There were people who had protected Demons with all of their power as well. Even though it was obvious that he would have to cut down those from both sides for his path to

happiness, she had come to question herself, asking ‘Is the me of today truly correct?’ when she saw the times Kagami became worn out while trying to stand against others.

Surely, she would have immediately answered that it was ‘correct’ before she met Kagami. It was simply that the encounter with Kagami had been a huge shock for Krul.

“Values are easily changed from one’s experience...rather, it would be strange if they didn’t change.”

Takako said, with a smile on her face, as if backing her up. It was as if Takako was declaring that change was never a bad thing.

“That’s right...It’s stranger to not change.”

For some reason, David’s expression darkened as he replied to Takako’s words.

“However, Krul-sama has pushed forward with her resolve to subjugate the Demon King ever since her childhood. Although the goal is to save up money, if it were the Krul-sama of the past, perhaps she would have been here with a tense expression, trying to stick to her beliefs more. Perhaps she would have continued on a separate path...”

Even though it would be strange otherwise, and even if it was strange for Krul to not be like that, Alice felt strange when she heard David, who looked like he wanted to say something, and tilted her head. Certainly, when she had first met with Krul, as well as the times after that, she had felt that Krul was living to chase after something, and she didn’t particularly think that someone changing after gaining experience was anything special.

“Encounters can change people. Either good or bad.”

Takako muttered, as if she understood him.

“You know...for that reason...your existences...are especially amazing for Kagami-sama.”

Whether or not he thought that from the bottom of his heart, Alice somehow understood David, who had said that that with his eyes shut. Since Kagami was a someone who could change things by himself, she felt that changing after

meeting him wasn't anything special. That's how she interpreted it.

"David-san, you are also trying to change after meeting with me."

"Is that ri...huh? Huhhhh?"

When Takako, who looked like she was deeply moved by him, muttered that and approached David, sweat flowed down from his forehead, and he showed a smile. From Takako's tone of voice, she had entered her 'Pushy Mode', since he was thinking about her. Alice, who had uttered the same words earlier, sensed the change and looked at David with pitiful eyes while muttering 'Good luck... David-san.'

# What's Truly Important Isn't Money | Part 8

"Pardon my rudeness, but it's about time for the last order of imports to arrive, so please allow me to be excused. I must help out with bringing them in, so I will return later on. If it's fine with you, Krul-sama, I would be happy if you just waited here."

David avoided this with a god-like timing and what could only be thought of as an excuse. However, his expression turned serious and his speech became polite, so his standard performance couldn't be called a lie.

Although David didn't normally try to leave Krul's side, he needed to complete his work perfectly. Even if he did a good job, it was better for it to be done slowly, and all the people present had interpreted that his tidying up quickly, with all his might, showed that the time he spent beside Krul was important to him.

Therefore, Takako couldn't say anything about David, who was using his valuable time to try and tear himself away from Krul.

"Geez, we'll wait at the break area, so come back here once you're done. Let's go eat breakfast with everyone as a preparatory celebration for the Casino's opening."

"Hoho, I'll look forward to that. I'll go tidy it up in a jiffy."

Then, David departed from the break area as if he was running away. With a maiden-like face that didn't suit her sturdy physique at all, Takako saw David off with a look of envy.

This scene reflected into Alice's and Krul's view for a moment, but they immediately looked elsewhere.

“W-Well then...shall we continue?”

The moment Takako grabbed onto Alice's shoulder with a face full of smiles, she realized that she had lost her one hope of trying to resolve this situation, and her eyes lost their vigor.

“Ara...? That David, it looks like he forgot his gloves.”

However at this time, Krul approached a table in the break area as if she had noticed something, and then she took the work gloves on the table as she said that.

“Hey, has David-san always had these gloves?”

“Well...it's normal for David to cover his hands since it's hot and humid...but not having gloves may hurt his hands today, since he said that his work involves carrying the imported goods. Perhaps he had considered that and prepared them in advance.”

Alice's vigor was restored as she listened to this, and then she quickly took the gloves away from Krul as if aware of something.

Alice immediately realized that this was a chance to escape that David had prepared for her, and rather than letting herself get caught, she quickly took action.

“David-san must have these or he'll be in trouble, so I'll go take them to him!”

“Wait, Alice-chan! I'll do it!”

Although Takako had yelled that out desperately, Alice quickly departed from break area without listening to her. It was impossible to chase down Alice, who had left immediately, without wasting her breath to argue, and after the chance passed by her, Takako held a handkerchief in her mouth and vented her regrets with all of her power.

“I'm glad...As expected of David-san. Although these clothes are hard to move in...it's a lot better than being restrained by those two, I'll have to thank him properly later.”

Alice muttered that after she left the break area, and walked in a passage built exclusively for the casino staff. Looking at the gloves she took from Krul, she

thought, ‘Does David’s work really involve carrying the imported goods?’

“It would be troublesome...without them.”

Although the gloves had probably been prepared to help him out, thinking about the possibility of him not having them, Alice began to run in search of David.

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Several minutes later, she had searched in all of the places where he could be within the Casino, but she couldn’t find David anywhere.

She even went to the place where they were receiving the imports, but the staff members present said that the goods had yet to arrive and thought that he was surely working in another area. There had not been any staff there, besides the one who had tried to return to the passage that was lined with taverns after finishing their work, and the staff members who liked Alice and gave her candy.

While walking in the Casino’s halls, most of the staff members who had tried to return had offered information that they had seen David, but even if she headed to the places where they said they saw him, David wouldn’t be there, nor at the bar where she had thought he would head to, and she ended the search upon getting pats on the head and receiving candy from the cleaning staff.

She was finally unable to guess where he’d gone, and although she tried to confirm if he was in the suspicious shop that was named ‘Takako’s Room,’ Alice immediately closed the door 0.5 seconds after opening it, and then headed to the Chapel.

Tina was in the Chapel, but she hadn’t seen David, and the ones who had come by were just Kagami and Rex, and after the two of them had helped out a little bit, they had gone somewhere else.

“I wonder where...David-san is.”

Alice, who had received a lot of candy while walking through the Casino, had her hands full of candy and the stuffed animal from Kagami. She walked to the nearby area with the warehouse, which was located outside the Casino.

She had begun to think that, if she didn’t find him here after searching all this

time, he surely would have passed by her once his work finished and he might have already returned to the break area.

“...and then...by this.”

At this time, a familiar voice entered Alice’s ears. She raised her head, and, after looking at many trees near the warehouse, she saw David and a man, who seemed to be part of the staff, conversing.

“Found you...! David-san!”

Alice felt deeply moved at finally finding him after spending a long time searching for him, and she waved her hands and rushed towards him as she yelled that out.

David immediately heard Alice’s yell, and after he looked towards Alice, he shrugged with an ‘oya, oya,’ and ended his conversation with the staff person before walking towards Alice.

“...Ah!”

However, at this time, perhaps it was due to rushing while both of her hands were occupied, but she ended up tripping.

“D-...Dangerous!”

Seeing Alice tripping, David, who had concluded that she would get hurt, immediately rushed towards her, and tried to reduce the distance before Alice fell.

Although he was a Merchant, David, whose level was 77, succeeded in easily closing the distance, and supported Alice’s body. However:

“A...wa.”

When he supported her, his hand caught on the ribbon that was tied on Alice’s hair on the back of her head, and just like that, David ended up taking the cloth that suppressed the magic power of Alice’s right horn.

At that moment, the distinctive magic power of a Demon began to flow out from Alice’s horn little by little, like overflowing bubbles drifting in the air. Although Alice hid her horn in a hurry and separated from David, the magic power that had begun to flow didn’t escape his notice, and David still held the

cloth that suppressed magic power in his hands.

David's expression had changed from his regular smile. He was rather calm, as if confirming it, and his expression changed to one which could only intimidate her. Alice, who had given up all hope after seeing his silent expression, became paralyzed with fear and fell down on the spot with a 'petan.'

Then, with a, "What should I do," as tears formed in her eyes, Alice desperately struggled with the thought of being found out.

"...That's a splendid ornament. Was it a present from Kagami-sama?"

"...Huh?"

However, facing these unexpected words, Alice blinked in surprise.

The horn that grew on the right side of the back of Alice's head was no longer concealed by the cloth and was completely exposed. However, David undid his earlier expression, smiled again, and then he extended his hand to Alice, who had fallen.

Presently, magic power was flowing out from the horn as if it were floating. As expected, it couldn't be passed off as a Blue Devil's horn. Yet, David had said that as if he didn't care about it.

"Y-Yeah. Kagami-san made this for me."

Alice replied to him while avoiding meeting his eyes.

After that, David nodded once with a smile, as if indicating he was fine with this, and then he handed the magic power absorbing cloth, which he had accidentally taken, back to her.

"I see...wrapping the cloth around this deals with it nicely, it must be something precious to you."

Despite being clearly revealed as a Demon by the magic power that was emitting from her horn, Alice received the cloth and was dumbfounded by David, who had become quiet without asking why there hadn't been any magic power flowing from the horn until now.

After she received it, Alice quickly and hurriedly tried to wrap the cloth around her horn, since she didn't know if someone else would pass by. However, she

couldn't wrap it skillfully, since whenever it had come undone, Takako or Kagami would be there to put it on for her.

"Hoho, if you're fine with it, allow me to help out."

Whether or not he thought Alice's flustered manner was strange, David said that with a pleasant smile and helped Alice wrap the cloth around her horn.

"It's perfect like this. The ribbon suits you quite well, and you have the same beauty as Krul-sama did when she was a child."

"T-Thanks."

Alice expressed her thanks, with a slight stutter, towards David, who didn't need to say anything else.

"Well then, I will also head towards the break area after this. I still have some work left to do, so I will return as soon as that is done. If you are searching for Kagami-sama, it's probably better for Alice-sama to return, since earlier, he had mentioned that he would head to the break area."

David said that and turned back after listening to Alice. He then tried to leave.

Although Alice had heard David, who wore a foolish look, she once again rushed toward David the moment she heard him, as if remembering something and:

"U-...Um!"

Saying that, she handed the work gloves over to David.

"Oh, well, well. You took the trouble to deliver these to me. Thank you."

He received the gloves like usual, and David said, "Well then," and tried to leave just like that without asking anything else.

Towards this, although she couldn't get the words, "Why did he not ask about it?", out of her throat, she reconsidered that he might have pretended not to realize it. She closed her mouth once, and then:

"I-I'm the one who should say thank you!"

To make up for that, she said just those words to him.

After that, David looked back at her, and after putting on a satisfied, happy

smile, he replied, "It's not a problem," and then vanished into the Casino.

Alice was filled with emotion after seeing his smile, turned around, and once again, lightly walked towards the break area where Kagami was located.

Xant: Next one wraps up this chapter.

# What's Truly Important Isn't Money | Part 9

"This isn't something you should be saying so casually, Kagami-dono! It's dangerous to leave it alone!"

Alice returned to the passage exclusive to the Casino Staff again and tried to turn the knob to the door of the break area. However, at that moment, she heard yelling from inside the break area, and just for a moment, Alice shrunk back.

She slowly opened the door and peeped inside, as if wary of something. Inside stood a restless Krul, Takako, and Rex. Kagami was also there, seeming troubled by something as he stood with his arms folded, and Menou, wearing a stern look, had tried to grab Kagami's shirt collar.

"Please calm down, Menou-chan. I understand your eagerness, and while that may be true, she would have tried to let you know first if she had to run away or hide."

The appeasing Takako, who spoke with a serious expression, seemed like a completely different person from the one Alice had seen when she left the break area.

"Everyone. D-did something happen?"

Although she had become slightly insecure when she thought that they were having a dispute, Alice entered the break area as soon as she saw that it wasn't the case and asked that question timidly. The attention of everyone in the room gathered on her. As soon as he saw Alice, Menou approached her in the blink of an eye and took her hand, seeming relieved from the bottom of his heart.

"I couldn't see you, and you worried me, Alice-sama! I'm glad you're safe!"

"I said I was going to hand David-san his gloves didn't I? You're over exaggerating things."

Seeing Menou's nervous response, Takako shook her head saying, "yare, yare."

"Come, Alice-sama! Let's go to a land far away from here, together, just the two of us! Everything will surely be handled by Kagami-dono later on!"

"Eh...no way. I don't want to be separated from Kagami-san's side."

After Alice replied to Menou with a blunt denial, he received damage to his soul and yelled out, "Guhah!" However, he immediately recovered and said, "That's not something you should be saying so casually!", as if he was at his wits' end.

"Calm down, Menou-chan. Alice-chan still doesn't know anything, remember?"

Takako pulled Menou away from Alice, as if suppressing him, and said that. Feeling tired, he then uttered, "Mu...that's right. Sorry," as he seemingly calmed down a bit.

"But Shishou, if what Menou says is true, then won't it be bad for several reasons? At the very least, if Menou's and Alice's identities are discovered, surely, it won't just be us who will be sorry."

Rex said that as he faced Kagami with his arms folded, as though something was wrong. Towards this, Kagami just groaned, "Hmmm..." and didn't say anything.

"That's why, please tell me, too, if something happened! Did something happen while I was away?"

Alice, who had become anxious while trying to process the story after being left out, yelled that.

"I've heard Menou talk about David being a spy for the Kingdom, though."

Kagami said that with a sigh.

"A spy...of the Kingdom? David-san is?"

As she listened to Kagami, Alice's face distorted in disbelief.

"It was when he accepted Kagami's kind offer, and tried to return after changing his clothes. David-dono was strangely cautious of his surroundings, even in the Tavern he was in charge of. I thought it was unnatural to head off somewhere that wasn't the delivery point, so I followed him. And then...there

was a spy wearing a Staff uniform as a disguise near the warehouse."

Listening to Menou, Alice immediately recalled David and the conversation he had with the Staff member near the warehouse. Since it was something she had personally witnessed, the hope that Menou was mistaken, was crushed.

"Was that person...truly a spy? Was he truly in disguise?"

"There's no doubt about it. I heard them speaking with my own ears. 'Here, this is the information that should be relayed to the King. At the moment, Rex-sama and Krul-sama have not shown any suspicious movement,' and then I definitely saw him handing over a document of some sort. Without a doubt...he ran away since he suspected that someone was listening in on him."

After Menou uttered that seriously, Alice, who usually didn't know how bad these events were nor what kind of impact they would have, could somehow feel the gravity of the situation.

"It might not be impossible...if it's David-san. I do admit that David was superior in completing work without waste in the past."

Krul uttered that restlessly.

Takako and Kagami then understood the meaning of this instantly.

This excellent and talented person did have the obligation to observe Krul, but it was impossible to act useless when helping out with Kagami's work. There wasn't a need to virtually cling to them in order to observe them if his job was to 'confirm whether or not they were working every day for the Demon King subjugation.'

In other words, there was a reason for these things.

"...observing Alice...huh?"

Kagami scratched his head, looking troubled, as he muttered that.

Kagami had always thought that David was reluctant to separate from Krul's side. However, he was now questioning if that was true, and if his real goal was Alice.

The issue was the source of the information leak. Kagami had willfully believed he was Krul's observer, but could it be that he had been wrong, and David had

actually been observing Alice?

"Although the Kingdom's side doesn't know anything...they appear to be doubting us a bit."

If that was really the case, then the Kingdom knew Alice's origins, and there was a possibility of it being exposed. At the very least, the Kingdom doubted Alice.

What information did they receive that made them doubt her?

# What's Truly Important Isn't Money | Part

## 10

It was hard to think of other people who had heard the conversation between the Demon King and Estellar at the battle of Salumeria. Kagami himself had confirmed that there was nobody in the surroundings. If there really was anyone who had his or her ears open during that situation, Estellar probably would have dealt with them quickly.

However, it was only Kagami who knew this. Although there was value in just asking about it, even if he was refused, when considering whether this was true or not, this knowledge wouldn't be taken seriously with just one person's evidence. If he considered that David was concealing himself, then the possibility of it being him was high.

"Hold on, Master. Why does this show that he is observing Alice?"

Rex asked and inclined his head.

"What I mean is that Menou said 'Guys,' right? Even if he were just observing Krul and Rex, isn't it weird to go to the point of also reporting things about us? He even said 'suspicious movements,' like he suspects us."

After Kagami said that, Rex also showed a serious look and muttered 'I see,' as if he understood.

"There's not much meaning in observing Kagami-san, who has nothing to hide. Takako-san and Tina as well. But...it's different for Menou-san and Alice-chan."

It was clear that he was behaving suspiciously. The one who felt this the most was Krul. David had always been beside her, and recently, she had felt something strange from his looks.

He had looked at her differently. Perhaps this truly was about Alice. Considering David was reporting about things other than Krul and Rex to the Kingdom, it was clear.

“But I...even though David-san was investigating my actions from the shadows, I can’t imagine him reporting this to the Kingdom. As expected...he isn’t just observing Krul-san’s actions.”

Alice uttered this, as if something had come to mind.

“Why do you think so?”

Kagami asked, thinking she might have confidence in her words after seeing Alice’s expression.

“My horn...David-san saw it, but he didn’t say a word about me being a Demon. It looked like he planned on keeping silent about it, and already knew that I’m a Demon.”

Everyone that heard Alice’s words gave her bewildered looks. Only Menou grabbed Alice’s shoulders while trembling, and said:

“As I thought, let’s run away from here immediately!”

Although he had stated his desire, Takako immediately pulled Menou away from Alice, and calmed him down once again.

“Eei! Release me, Takako-dono!”

“I understand your panic, but calm down, Menou-chan. It would be suspicious if only the two of you left, right?”

After Takako said that, she confirmed with Kagami, asking “Right?”. Kagami nodded his head, as if he had considered it, and said, “Well, that’s right.”

Although Kagami had considered that David was a dangerous existence that shouldn’t be provoked, he reconsidered a bit after listening to the story about David seeing Alice’s horn.

“Menou...you heard David say, ‘No suspicious movements have been discovered,’ right? Even though he knows Alice is a Demon, isn’t it weird that he said that?”

"This...He only acted calm for the moment, and in reality, there is also the possibility that it was the first time he had gained proof of her being a Demon. I'm sure he will say that Alice-sama is a Demon in the next report."

Although there was certainly a possibility that David had been acting, when Kagami saw Alice's anxious expression, he couldn't believe that that was the case at all. It was because he saw "I can't believe that he would do such a thing," written all over her face.

"There is still the possibility that he is protecting Alice. If that's the case, it might be troublesome for David if the two of you were to vanish, and make him unable to protect you two."

"David doesn't have a reason to protect Alice-sama, does he? Although I don't know what it is about us that he's investigating, he went out of his way to come here for a job from the Kingdom. There is no reason for him to have come here to protect her."

Menou immediately denied Kagami's suggestion. Menou's words were reasonable. There wasn't any reason to protect her. The probability of it being true was also low when considering Krul's words about him efficiently completing his work.

At that moment, Kagami directed his gaze at Alice and inclined his head, as if asking her, 'How about it?'. Alice, who noticed his gaze, showed him a slightly worried expression, but gave him a determined nod. Seeing this, Kagami became eager with a, "Yosh," and:

"If he observes us, then let's observe him. If he reports that Alice is a Demon in his next report, then we'll consider it again. For now, let's trust David."

After saying this, Kagami declared, "Well then, let's go wait for David's return, and go eat dinner," while ignoring the atmosphere.

If Alice were to consider trusting David, saying, 'It's all right,' then Kagami would support her with all his power. This would definitely be progress for the goal of coexistence between Demons and humans. That was the reason for his behavior.

Although Menou seemed momentarily troubled by these words, he uttered,

"Understood," while watching Alice, who looked happy listening to Kagami's declaration. Then he let out a sigh, as if it couldn't be helped.

Takako was the one who volunteered to keep a lookout, so they decided to leave it to her, since her movements were good and she had high physical abilities, like Kagami.

Although Kagami didn't care if Takako had her own reasons for volunteering, it wasn't a problem for him, so he brushed it off.

It had been one week since the day before the Casino's opening. Not once did David relay that Alice was a Demon to the Kingdom's spy. The only thing he would report was, "No suspicious movements have been discovered."